

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 MC-02 ACDA-19 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 SAM-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /170 W

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R 171017Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9313

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

CSAF WASHDC

DA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DOHA POUCH

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT POUCH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1494

BEIRUT PASS DAMASCUS AND BAGHDAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: MASS, KU

SUBJ: KUWAIT SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR PURCHASE OF MIRAGE JETS

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SUMMARY: GOK HAS CONCLUDED AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE FOR PURCHASE OF 32 MIRAGE JETS AT COST OF APPROXIMATELY 1500 MILLION FRANCS, ACCORDING PARIS REUTER STORY. IN ANNOUNCING DEAL, MINDEF, SHAIKH SAAD REVEALED THAT TALKS CONTINUING WITH AMERICANS AND BRITISH RE OTHER AIRCRAFT ALSO. IN ADDITION KUWAIT NEGOTIATING PURCHASE OF SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES, NAVAL EQUIPMENT, TANKS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING. MINDEF AFFIRMED THAT KUWAIT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH USSR RE PURCHASING MILITARY EQUIPMENT. END SUMMARY

1. KUWAIT PAPERS APRIL 17 HEADLINED SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOK AND FRANCE FOR LATTER TO SUPPLY 32 MIRAGE F-1 FIGHTERS FOR KUWAIT AIR FORCE. PAPERS REPORT STATEMENTS BY ACTING PRIME MINISTER AND MINDEF SHAIKH SAAD ON AIRCRAFT DEAL AND OTHER PENDING MILITARY PURCHASES.

2. RE F-1 DEAL, FACT THAT PLANES AMONG FASTEST IN WORLD STRESSED. IN PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 16 SHAIKH SAAD SAID F-1 WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH AIR-TO-AIR GUIDED MISSILES AND MOST MODERN AND SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT. HE REVEALED THAT PLANES CAN BE USED IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS SINCE THEY CAPABLE CARRYING BOMBS AND AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILES. HE ALSO SAID THAT PLANES CAN BE USED IN RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS. PRESS CARRIES STORY FROM PARIS THAT FRENCH AND PAKISTANI PILOTS WILL TRAIN KUWAITIS.

3. SHAIKH SAAD STATED THAT KUWAIT MILITARY EXPERTS ARE STUDYING OTHER OFFERS FOR AMERICAN AND BRITISH PLANES AND SAID HE HOPED MORE DEALS WOULD BE CONCLUDED SOON. LOCAL PRESS CARRIES STATEMENTS OF USG OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON WHO WERE REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THEY EXPECT KUWAIT ALSO TO BUY ANGLO-FRENCH JAGUAR FIGHTER BOMBER AND OFFERING ITS A-7 FIGHTER BOMBER. ONE PAPER SAID KUWAIT CONSIDERING PURCHASE OF F-4 PHANTOMS.

4. IN PRESS CONFERENCE SHAIKH SAAD ALSO INFORMED PUBLIC GOK CURRENTLY STUDYING OFFERS FOR SOPHISTICATED GROUND-TO-AIR MISSILES.

5. DURING COURSE OF PRESS CONFERENCE MINDEF ALSO TALKED ABOUT KUWAIT INTEREST IN RADAR AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS AND NEW AIR BASES WHICH WOULD BE PART OF OVERALL EFFORT TO IMPROVE AIR DEFENSE
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AND ON KUWAITI PLANS TO BUILD UP ITS NAVAL FORCE. HE MENTIONED THAT KUWAIT WAS CONSIDERING BUYING BOATS WITH SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES WHICH CAN BE USED FOR OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE PURPOSES. SHAIKH SAAD ALSO REVEALED TO PRESS KUWAITI INTEREST IN PURCHASING TANKS, AND PRESS REPORTS INDICATED THAT GOK IS REVIEWING PROPOSALS FROM U.S., FRANCE AND U.K. ONE PAPER SAID THAT KUWAIT IS CONSIDERING A SOVIET OFFER FOR HEAVY ARTILLERY AND TANKS BUT SHAIKH SAAD SAID THAT NO REPLY HAS YET BEEN RECEIVED FROM MOSCOW TO PROPOSALS

PUT TO RUSSIANS BY KUWAIT MILITARY DELEGATION WHICH RECENTLY VISITED SOVIET CAPITAL.

6. ON OTHER MILITARY MATTERS, SHAIKH SAAD NOTED THAT TRAINING IS INHERENT PART OF ALL DIFFERENT PROGRAMS UNDER CONSIDERATION AND THAT SPARE PARTS PART OF EACH PACKAGE. HE STRESSED THAT F-1 DEAL AND PRESUMABLY OTHER DEALS UNDER CONSIDERATION ARE BEING MADE "WITHOUT STRINGS". HE DEFLECTED A QUESTION ON FATE OF A CONSCRIPTION BILL IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY SAYING THAT IT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BY APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE IN THE ASSEMBLY.

7. SHAIKH SAAD WAS ASKED ABOUT COORDINATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AND HE SAID THAT NO PROBLEMS HAVE YET BEEN ENCOUNTERED AS A RESULT OF DIVERSIFICATION OF ARMS SUPPLIERS IN THE REGION, BUT HE ADDED AS DEFENSE MINISTER HE IS INTERESTED TO SEE THAT COUNTRIES IN GULF AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE HAVE SIMILAR EQUIPMENT. WHEN ASKED IF THERE ANY AGREEMENT ALLOWING KUWAITI PILOTS TO ENTER THE AIR SPACE OF OTHER COUNTRIES DURING TRAINING MISSIONS, HE REPLIED "THERE IS COMPLETE COORDINATION BETWEEN KUWAIT AND ITS NEIGHBORS".

8. COMMENT: DURING PRESS CONFERENCE, KUWAIT MINDEF PROVIDED MOST DETAILED PUBLIC STATEMENT SO FAR OF KUWAIT MILITARY PROGRAM. FURTHER COMMENT BY SEPTEL. (NOTAL).
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